

ADVISOR TRAINING PROGRAM INITIATIVES

Since early 2006, the Training and Education Command's (TECOM) Security Cooperation Education and Training Center (SCETC) has been involved in a dramatic build-up to formalize the partner-military advisor training process. This has encompassed creating a standards-based predeployment training construct, stand-up of a training support cadre, enhancements to training equipment sets, and development of related resources and funding for immediate operations, sustainment and support for emerging requirements.

With the January 2006 Executive Off-Site decision to formalize the advisor training process, SCETC was the lead in providing near-term predeployment training relief to the Marine Expeditionary Forces (MEF) - specifically, the Block IV (advisor-specific) portion of the Predeployment Training Plan (PTP). The SCETC Advisor Training Group (ATG) was established in early 2007 as the permanent training cadre at the Marine Air Ground Task Force Training Command (MAGTFTC) tasked with executing predeployment training for all Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF) and Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) Transition Teams at MAGTFTC, the Mountain Warfare Training Center (MWTC), Bridgeport, CA., and Hawthorne Army Depot (HAWD), Hawthorne, NV. On 1 October 2007, in an effort to enhance training effectiveness and requisite support for Transition Teams, the ATG was transferred from SCETC and TECOM to MAGTFTC.

The process of formalizing Transition Team training began with a January 07 Proof of Concept at MAGTFTC that validated the early Program of Instruction and requisite resources, with training initially built around a 25-day plan. During October 2007, OIF training transitioned to a 19-day cycle that builds upon the MEF-level (Home Station) preparation, with a training construct that attempts to culturally immerse teams in a series of training engagements that emphasize scenario-based events and extensive use of role players. Exercise Mountain Viper is the Block IV training for all OEF Embedded Training Teams (ETT), encompassing a 21-day training evolution, culminating in a Mission Rehearsal Exercise (MRX) and Assessment of team capabilities. The inaugural Mountain Viper 01-07 was completed in May 2007, and included training at MAGTFTC, MWTC, and HAWD.

In order to effectively prepare all OIF and OEF Transition Teams and prepare Marines to be advisors, greater emphasis is placed on the train, mentor, and advise concept, with training scripted to incorporate mission-specific or team-type training (Military, Police, Border, and Embedded). The concept of operations allows for counterpart training, whereby events and situations focus on Division, Brigade, and Battalion advisor teams. All training culminates in an MRX and Assessment spanning several days that is utilized to evaluate the advisor capabilities of the teams while allowing the teams

to gain final validation of their Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures and team building opportunities.

Between June and December 2007, the Advisor Training Group trained over thirty Transition Teams in what was a period of implementation and revision as an element in the process of formalizing advisor training. For fiscal year 2008, the ATG is slated to train an estimated seventy-two teams consisting of over 1400 Marine advisors.